



Memorandum

TO: PLANNING COMMISSION

FROM: Stephen M. Haase
Sara L. Hensley
Jay Marcus

**SUBJECT: MAYFAIR
STRONG NEIGHBORHOODS
IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

DATE: November 13, 2002

COUNCIL DISTRICT: 5

RECOMMENDATION

Planning staff advises the Planning Commission to recommend that the City Council: (1) approve the *Mayfair Strong Neighborhoods Improvement Plan* as the City/community vision for the future of the Mayfair Neighborhood, (2) authorize the Administration to direct the City Departments and Agencies with implementation responsibilities to begin their respective activities, including the general oversight of the implementation of the *Plan* by the Redevelopment Agency, and (3) encourage the Mayfair property owners, residents and community members to dedicate their time, energy and resources to implement the recommendations of the *Plan* and continue their community building activities.

BACKGROUND

Mayfair Planning Area. The approximately 320-acre Mayfair SNI area, located east of downtown San Jose, is generally bordered by Alum Rock Avenue to the north, King Road to the west and U.S. 680 to the east and the south. The neighborhood is largely comprised of residential areas, with the predominant housing type being one-story, single-family homes and duplexes. Commercial uses are primarily concentrated along Alum Rock and Jackson Avenues, with some additional commercial uses along King Road and San Antonio Street. Alum Rock Avenue is a Neighborhood Business District that extends from White Road to the east through the Mayfair SNI area to U.S. 101 just west of the neighborhood.

There are three public elementary schools in the neighborhood, more than a dozen religious facilities, the Mayfair Community Center and Gardens, and the Mexican Heritage Plaza. There are also a number of community-based organizations in Mayfair including the Mayfair Improvement Initiative, the Mexican American Community Services Agency, the San Jose Grail

Development Corporation, Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County, and the East San Jose Community Law Center.

There are no traditional neighborhood associations within the Mayfair SNI area; instead, the community interests have been represented and promoted by the Mayfair Improvement Initiative (MII). MII, established in 1996 by the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, is a cross-disciplinary effort whose mission is to improve the human and physical conditions of Mayfair, one of several low-income neighborhoods in the nine-county Bay Area selected for the Improvement Program. Through MII's efforts, a vision for Mayfair was developed and documented in the *Mayfair Strategic Plan for Neighborhood Transformation* (September 1997). The proposed SNI *Plan* builds on the visions and goals documented in the *Strategic Plan*, and presents specific actions for implementation by the community and the City who will work together to make desired quality of life improvements within Mayfair.

Mayfair Planning Process and Participation. During the preparation of the *Plan*, City staff and the planning consultant, Design, Community and Environment (DCE), worked with community members and an approximately 25-member Neighborhood Advisory Committee (NAC). The group met once or more a month from January 2002 through November 2002, and a total of 250 individual people from the area attended at least one of the meetings. Four community workshops, to gather input from the larger community, were held during the same time frame.

Meetings and workshops were facilitated by a combination of participants, including the consultant and representatives from the Mayfair Improvement Initiative and The Pinnacle Company (as a bilingual facilitator). DCE wrote and assembled the draft *Plan*. The last workshop, held in August 2002, was well attended by over 100 adults, who participated in several exercises designed to establish the top priorities for the community. The NAC compiled the final list as discussed below. The *Plan* was reviewed by the NAC on November 7, 2002 and adopted on November 15, 2002.

ANALYSIS

Purposes of the Plan. The purpose of the *Mayfair Improvement Plan* is to capture the concerns, vision, and ideas of residents, business owners, property owners and other stakeholders in the area and bring them together into a working document that helps guide future actions in the community.

Vision. Stakeholders in the Mayfair SNI area crafted a vision for the future of their neighborhood where:

- ? People work together, to support one another to improve the neighborhood;
- ? There are good schools and community facilities providing quality educational experiences for adults and children;

- ? Decent, safe, sanitary and high quality affordable housing is available to all residents;
- ? It is safe and easy to walk on neighborhood streets;
- ? People are given the opportunities and resources to find and maintain well-paying jobs;
- ? There are adequate open space, park and recreational opportunities for the community;
- ? There is an environment in which all residents can live, work and prosper without fear in safe and healthy surroundings;
- ? The Mayfair neighborhood provides a clean, inviting and well-maintained environment in which businesses can prosper and families can thrive; and
- ? There are adequate transit options for residents to travel to work, school or leisure activity destinations.

Draft Plan. Over the course of the planning process, community members discussed many actions and policies that could bring positive changes to the area. The Action Plan is comprised of those Action Items selected by community members as the best means for achieving the community's shared vision for the future.

A. The "Top Ten" Priority Actions. The "Top Ten" Priority Actions represent the short list of priority actions that the community selected as having the greatest potential for positive impact. Priority actions were chosen by community members at a workshop in August 2002, and refined by the NAC. They are ranked in order of importance:

1. Establish an Adult Learning Center.
2. Construct a new library in Mayfair.
3. Build more affordable housing particularly for families and seniors.
4. Upgrade street lighting throughout the neighborhood to meet current standards.
5. Increase police presence.
6. Increase gang prevention programs and activities in Mayfair.
7. Investigate identified neighborhood traffic issues; and develop and implement traffic calming plan.
8. Implement a neighborhood cleanliness campaign.
9. Improve employment assistance and employment programs for all Mayfair workers.
10. Support a proportionate increase of homeowners to renters in Mayfair.

B. Other Improvement Actions. The Action Plan is presented as a matrix, which identifies 36 Action Items including the "Top Ten" Priority Actions. Following are some highlights from the scope of the full Action Plan presented under its general headings:

1. Education. Community members seek to improve educational opportunities for the youth and adult population by increasing adult learning programs and facilities, and by

improving the quality of the Alum Rock School District. The community understands that improving the quality of teaching and facilities for their children is under the control of the School District Board, not of the City, and that advocacy on the community's part will be required to influence appropriate action by the school district.

2. Employment and Economic Development. In addition to increasing employment assistance and programs for all Mayfair workers, the community seeks to develop a day worker strategy, to increase outreach and assistance to business owners in the neighborhood, and to advocate for immigrant rights.
3. Housing. One of the top priorities in the *Plan* is to increase the stock of high-quality affordable housing in Mayfair. The community also seeks to improve the overall appearance of the neighborhood and increase the percentage of homeowners. Actions include encouraging home rehabilitation and landscape improvements, developing design standards for the neighborhood, and having City staff provide training workshops for property management, tenant rights and housing rehabilitation programs.
4. Library. Libraries are an important resource for the Mayfair community, not only for the obvious benefits they provide, but because they are positive environments in which families and youth can gather. The community understands that construction of a branch library in Mayfair is a long-term effort, therefore, in the interim they would like the City to explore strategies to improve existing services. Improvements recommended include establishing a shuttle service to nearby branch libraries and increasing the days and hours of operation of the Bookmobile.
5. Open Space and Beautification. Community members seek to improve the overall appearance and condition of the neighborhood by cleaning up and beautifying areas of the neighborhood. Recommended actions include improving Mayfair Park, creating walking trails along Lower Silver Creek, increasing code enforcement, and improving street sweeping efforts.
6. Public Safety. As indicated in the *Plan*, public safety is a significant concern for the community. In addition to increasing police presence, improving street lighting, and dealing with gang activity, the community is interested in increased outreach regarding available programs for domestic violence and drug and alcohol abuse.
7. Traffic and Pedestrian Safety. The community seeks to improve overall traffic and pedestrian safety, and improve and increase transit services. Actions included in the *Plan*, in addition to implementing a traffic-calming plan, include increasing bus routes and extending service hours, and building a light rail station at Sunset and Alum Rock Avenues.

Issues of particular note.

Second Units. The *Plan* recommends that the City explore the feasibility of allowing second units on existing single-family lots that are particularly deep. Community members are aware that second dwelling units are not currently allowed on single-family lots in San Jose. Many of the deep lots in Mayfair are underutilized, however, and residents feel that a limited regulation change could provide an opportunity to increase the housing stock within Mayfair and provide homeowners with an additional source of income.

Increase Domestic Violence Support Programs. During the planning process, community members reported that domestic violence is an issue in Mayfair. The *Plan* recommends that outreach efforts to inform the community, about existing domestic violence programs be increased, and that the Police Department's Family Violence Unit should work with the community to determine if existing programs need to be augmented.

Restrict Alcohol Sales Near Schools. Alcohol and drug abuse is an important issue in the Mayfair SNI area. Community members are especially concerned about the number of businesses in the area that sell alcohol, specifically those that operate in close proximity to schools. Therefore, the community recommends that the City take steps: to restrict liquor licenses near schools; help the community develop an "Alcohol Issues Committee" to track new licenses and to participate in the public process for issuance and transfer of licenses; and to work with the California Department of Alcohol and Beverage Control to improve the liquor permitting process.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

The *Plan* was developed in close coordination with residents, property and business owners and other stakeholders of the Mayfair neighborhood through approximately one-year of monthly NAC meetings and four community workshops. All property owners, residents, business owners and other stakeholders within the Mayfair area were invited to the meetings and community workshops through flyers and other outreach efforts by the Mayfair Improvement Initiative. Community members actively participated in each phase of the planning process.

COORDINATION

The preparation of the *Plan* was coordinated with the District 5 Council Office, the City Manager's Office, and various Departments and Agencies, including the Departments of Planning, Building, and Code Enforcement; Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services; Transportation; Public Works; Police; and the Redevelopment Agency.

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CEQA

An addendum was prepared to the San Jose 2020 General Plan Environmental Impact Report which was previously certified on August 16, 1994 by the City Council (Resolution Number 65459).

SARA L. HENSLEY, DIRECTOR

Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services

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